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LETTER DATED 24 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On behalf of my Government, I request that you distribute as a document of the Security Council the texts of the attached letters which were exchanged between President George Bush and the Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity on the crisis in the Gulf.

(Signed) Thomas R. PICKERING

Annex I

Letter dated 21 January 1991 from the Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity addressed to the President of the United States of America

We, the current Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity have the honour to inform you that we have today addressed an urgent and solemn appeal to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq on behalf of the people and countries of the African continent. We consider it our duty, at this rather late hour, to join our voice to those who have called for a cessation of hostilities in order to avoid further destruction and loss of human life and to allow for new efforts aiming at a peaceful solution of the crisis. We have therefore appealed to President Saddam Hussein to accept the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

In deciding to do so, we are conscious of the devastating consequences of the prevailing war, particularly the loss of lives and the destruction of property. We are also aware of the gravity of the situation and its far-reaching implications for the stability and security of the region and the world.

We sincerely believe that it is not too late to explore new avenues for peace and that every opportunity should be seized to achieve the objectives of the United Nations without further suffering and destruction. Our belief is based on the conviction that it is never too late to make an extra effort in the interest of peace.

In making this appeal to President Saddam Hussein, we are mindful of the profound attachment of the African people and the countries of our continent to the principles of national sovereignty and territorial integrity and their commitment to international legality. It was indeed against this background that African countries took a clear and firm position against the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and for the restoration of legality, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait.

Your Excellency, we are aware of and encouraged by your personal commitment to the establishment of a new international order based on sovereign equality, peace and security. In this respect, we believe that you will do everything possible and spare no effort to ensure an end to further destruction and loss of human life. We also make this appeal to Your Excellency as the leader of the international coalition with immense responsibility at this crucial hour.

We do understand the exceptional and difficult position your country has assumed in the present war. We are fully aware of all the efforts you and many others undertook to avoid the outbreak of the present war and to have the decision of the Security Council on the restoration of the sovereignty of Kuwait implemented by peaceful means. We are confident however that you will spare no effort at a slightest opportunity to give peace another chance.

Annex II

Letter dated 24 January 1991 from the President of the United States of America to the Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity

Thank you for your letter of 21 January informing me of the appeal of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to Saddam Hussein to withdraw Iraqi troops from Kuwait in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

The United States appreciates the support it is receiving from OAU and the vast majority of its member States in the current crisis. We are encouraged by the fact that African countries have taken a clear and firm position against Iraqi aggression and for the restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait.

These are exactly the goals the United States and its coalition allies, including several African States, are pursuing through our combat operations. As is stated in my address to the American people on 16 January, the objectives of the United States and its allies are clear: "Saddam Hussein's forces will leave Kuwait. The legitimate Government of Kuwait will be restored to its rightful place and Kuwait will once again be free."

The United States and the entire world community had hoped that the Gulf crisis could be resolved peacefully. As you know, five and a half months of intensive diplomatic efforts failed to persuade Iraq to comply with the will of the United Nations. Iraq made it abundantly clear that it had no intention of obeying the resolutions of the Security Council.

In the face of Saddam Hussein's repeated rejection of all diplomatic and peaceful options to resolve the crisis, the United States and its allies in the coalition had no alternative but to initiate combat operations.

I sincerely hope that your appeal on behalf of the people and countries of Africa, together with the past appeals of so many others, succeeds in convincing Saddam to withdraw immediately and completely his troops from Kuwait. For when Iraq complies with all relevant United Nations resolutions, peace can be restored.